garments exported during 1997-98 are as follows:-

Item	Quantity (In lakhs)	Value (Rs. crores)
Readymade garments	13,147 Pieces	18,389.57
Cotton fabrics	19,452 Sqm.	4,364.33
Woollen fabrics	95 Sqm.	147.34
Synthetic fabrics	699.68Kgs.	1,899.13

(b) The steps taken/under contemplation to increase textile exports have been as follows:-

(I) Steps taken:

In order to boost the exports of textiles and garments, Government have been taking a number of steps as detailed below:

(i) Closely interacting with the industry to evolve suitable policies to facilitate and promote exports. Such policy instruments include review of the quota policy, export import policy, fiscal policy, credit policy and framing of schemes like import of capital goods at zero/concessional duty for export production, duty free import of inputs for export production.

(ii) Organising through the Export Promotion Councils, Buyers-Sellers' meets, exhibitions and overseas business delegations of exporters.

(iii) Setting up of the high-powered Export Promotion Board, which facilitates prompt decision making on all major issues, particularly for export promotion including export promotion in the textile sector.

(iv) Encouraging quality consciousness among textile exporters through the Textile Committee, the Textile Research Associations and the Textile Export Promotion Councils concerned.

(v) Providing skilled manpower at the managerial and shop floor levels through institutions like the National Institute of Fashion Technology and the Apparel Training & Design Centre.

(II) Steps under consideration:

(i) A technological upgradation fund to enhance the competitive efficiency of textile industry.

(ii) A cotton technology mission to increase productivity which would have a long term effect on the availability of cotton yarn and fabric for both export and domestic production at reasonable prices. This would ensure cost competitiveness to our fabrics and further value added products in the overseas markets.

(iii) Lowering the threshold limit to Rs. one crore in case of textile machineries under the Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme (EPCG), as has been done for the garment sector recently.

Technology Upgradation Fund

*605. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have finalised a plan for setting up a technology upgradation fund for the textile sector;

(b) if so, the size of the basic corpus of the fund and the sources for creating it;

(c) the present status of the proposal; and

(d) the details of the proposal and the specific areas proposed to be upgraded in phases?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) to (d) A proposal is under formulation to facilitate modernisation, through technology upgradation, of the textile industry. The intended objective is to improve production and productivity of the Indian textile industry to make it more competitive. It is proposed to make available loans with interest incentive to identified sectors of the textile industry. While no separate corupus for loans has been earmarked, it

has been estimated that the requirement of funds by identified sectors of the industry over a five year period could be of the order of Rs. 25,000 crore. Eligible units would be able to avail of such credit from All India Financial Institutions and Commercial Banks. Details of the Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme in this regard for the textiles and jute industries are being worked out.

Supreme Court Directives on Human Rights Violations

*606. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court gives directives and the executive delays their implementation on human rights violations;

(b) the awareness created to curb human rights violations for victims of torture; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) There are a number of cases in which the Supreme Court of India has given directives to both the States and the Union of India in matters pertaining to human rights issues. In the case of Union of India such directives are always complied with within a reasonable time by the concerned Ministries/Departments. The Union of India on its part have issued instructions/advice to its Ministries and Departments to implement the directives of the Supreme Court.

(b) and (c) The Government of India attaches highest importance to promotion and protection of human rights. It has issued guidelines to all the law enforcing authorities to instruct their personnel to behave in a humane manner during the discharge of their duties. They have also been instructed to take a serious view of cases of excesses committed by their staff and deal with the matter firmly. Further to sensitize the law enforcing agencies, "Human Rights" as a subject has also been included in their training curricula. A syllabus on human rights based on a model syllabus prepared by the National Human Rights Commission have been sent to all the State Governments for adoption.

Political Dialogue with ULFA

*607. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are taking steps to initiate political dialogue with ULFA;

(b) whether there are any conditions for such a dialogue; and

(c) whether there is any plan to suspend army operation as a gesture and to create congenial atmosphere for a dialogue?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) Government of Assam and Government of India have appealed to militant groups including ULFA, to give up arms and to come forward for unconditional talks to settle all issues through dialogue.

(c) No such proposal is under consideration of Union Government at present.

Freedom Fighters Claims for Pension

*608. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was a cut-off date for the claims of the freedom fighters for pension;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of applications received and considered, State-wise, till that date;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government are going to relax or extend the opportunities for those who could not get their claims due to lack of